

# Acquisition Reform Success Story

## Human Systems

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### Program Description

The Human Systems Program consists of Life Support, Aeromedical, and Nuclear/Biological/Chemical Defense equipment (aircrew masks/helmets/clothing, ejection seats, chemical detectors, protective shelters, aeromedical evacuation systems, etc.).

### How Streamlining Made a Difference

Measure comparison is between 11 ACAT III programs started/executed prior to Acquisition Reform initiatives (1996), and 11 after. These efforts range in size from several hundred thousand to half a billion dollars in development and procurement costs. Primary drivers for success and results are as follows. A focus on early industry and user involvement in market research prior to setting the acquisition strategy and finalizing requirements has led to a 46% increase in identification of COTS/NDI solutions. Less documentation, the Integrated Product Team (IPT) concept, and fewer decision points (e.g., combined Milestone Decisions, MS I/II) has allowed a 33% reduction in human resource requirements for programs over \$50M and a 43% reduction for those less than \$50M. For programs with a development phase, these factors helped reduce the average development cycle time from 56 to 43 months. Delegation of acquisition strategy approval, source selection authority, and milestone decision authority to the SPD for ACAT III programs under \$50M also helped. A final success factor is simplification of requirements documentation. Prior to Acquisition Reform, 8 out of 11 programs started with general requirements from a Statement of Operational Need (SON). By the time the Operational Requirements Document (ORD) was received, the more specific requirements often required a shift in the acquisition strategy. To help prevent this problem with new programs under Streamlining, if an ORD wasn't ready or appropriate for the size of the effort, a requirements letter was used to "lock-in" key performance parameters before starting the program.

Measure	From	To
Warfighter needs met with COTS/NDI solutions	9% (1 of 11)	55% (6 of 11)
Average Team Size-Large ACAT III Programs, > \$50M	9.6 man-yrs/yr	6.4 man-yrs/yr
Average Team Size-Small ACAT III Programs, < \$50M	5.2 man-yrs/yr	2.9 man-yrs/yr
Average Development Cycle Time (MS I/II to MS III)	56 months	43 months
Average Acquisition Cycle Time (First Acq Event* to IOC)	64 months	29 months

**Bottom Line:** On average, the Human Systems Program Office is delivering solutions to the warfighter in less than half the time we used to, over a 50% reduction in acquisition cycle time. Furthermore, we're achieving this by using about half the number of people we used to use per small ACAT III program and one-third less per larger ACAT III program.

\* First Acquisition Event may be Milestone (MS) I, combined MS I/II or MS I/III, or contract award. Following DoD 5000.2-R guidance, para 1.4, decision points were tailored to the needs of the individual program.